

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : Thomas M. Collins et al. Art Unit : 2155
Serial No. : 09/855,584 Examiner : Alicia Baturay
Filed : May 16, 2001 Conf. No. : 1405
Title : METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR DISTRIBUTING OF E-MAIL TO
MULTIPLE RECIPIENTS

Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

BRIEF ON APPEAL

(1) Real Party in Interest

The real party in interest is Mars Incorporated.

(2) Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no related appeals or interferences.

(3) Status of Claims

Claims 6, 17, 23, 29 and 40-71 stand rejected and are under appeal.

Claims 1-5, 7-16, 18-22, 24-28 and 30-39 were canceled previously.

(4) Status of Amendments

No amendments have been made after the Final Action of March 11, 2008.

(5) Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

Independent claim 6 with dependent claims 40-43

Claim 6 recites an article comprising a machine-readable medium storing machine-readable instructions that, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to perform the following operations:

A sender is enabled to input a message, append an attachment to the message and to designate at least one recipient to receive the message and the attachment, and to designate at least one recipient to receive the message without the attachment.

A recipient is enabled to create and edit a reception profile, which includes the recipient's preferences with regard to receipt of prospective attachments.

The message is transmitted over a network from the sender to the recipients.

For any recipient whose reception profile specifies not to receive an attachment, the message is transmitted from the sender to the recipient without the attachment regardless of whether the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with or without the attachment.

For any recipient whose reception profile specifies to receive an attachment, the message is transmitted to the recipient from the sender with the attachment, if the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with the attachment.

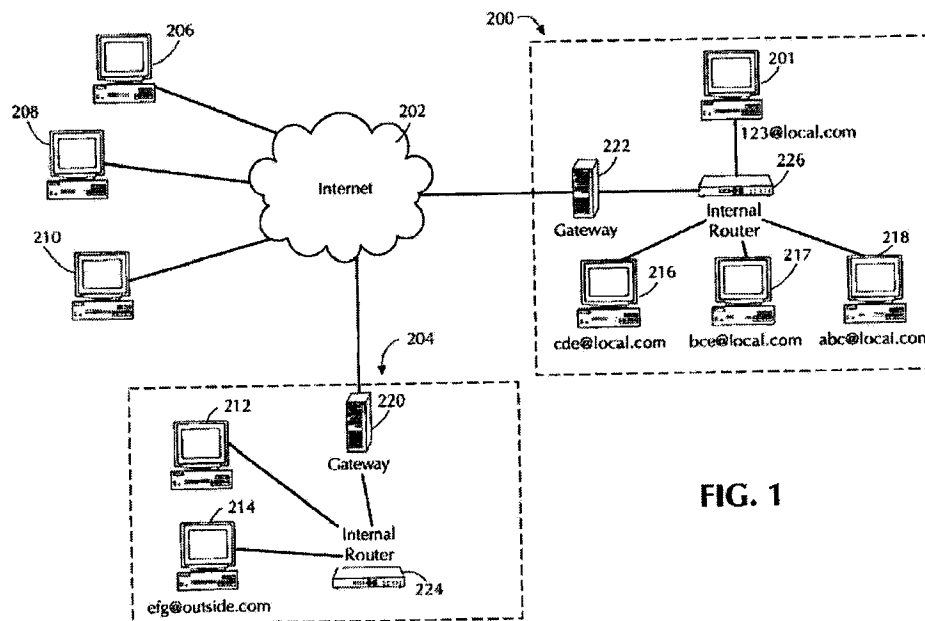


FIG. 1

As an example, e-mail transmission in a multi-network environment is disclosed in connection with FIG. 1 of the Application (reproduced above). A sender uses, for example, the sender computer 201 in a local area network 200 to input the message and to designate recipients. The recipients can be located at potential recipient computers 216-218 in the same local area network 200, at potential recipient computers 212 and 214 in another local area network 204 connected via the Internet 202 to the local area network 200, or at recipient computers 206-210 connected directly via the Internet 202 to the local area network 200.

The reception profile prevents transmission of an attachment from the sender computer 201 to a recipient computer of a recipient who has specified not to receive an attachment. However, the reception profile does not prevent transmission of an e-mail with an attachment if a) the sender designated the recipient to receive the attachment and b) the reception profile of the respective recipient specifies the recipient to receive such an attachment.

Thereby, the local area networks 200 and 204 and the Internet 202 are loaded with transmission of the attachment only if the reception profile is specified accordingly. If the reception profile does not so specify, the sender computer 201 will not load the attachment to the local area network 200.

Features of claim 6 are disclosed throughout the specification. For example, a sender computer 201 includes an e-mail program (*see* Specification, at page 11, ll. 25-27) that allows a user to attach a file (*see, Id., e.g.,* at pages 14, l. 13 – page 15, l. 21) and to designate which recipients should receive attached files (*see Id.,* at page 14, ll. 2-4).

Potential recipients can further form a reception profile including reception options with regard to receipt of attachments such as attachment size and time frame. (*See Id.,* at page 20, ll. 18-30.)

The reception profile influences the transmission process at the sender-side, *e.g.*, "the manner in which e-mail moves within and among networks." (*See Id., e.g.,* pages 12 and 13, at page 20, ll. 18-30, and at page 21, ll. 16-25.)

Dependent claims 40 and 41 recite features regarding creating and editing the reception profile and preventing receipt of prospective attachments, and dependent claims 42 and 43 recite specific features regarding editing the reception profile to specify an attachment size and time frame. (*See Id.,* at page 20, ll. 18-30.)

Independent claim 17 with dependent claims 44-47

Claim 17 recites an apparatus to transmit electronic mail from a sender to recipients. The apparatus comprises a port for coupling the apparatus to a network, and a processor. The processor is configured to enable means for a sender to append an attachment to an electronic mail message, to enable means for the sender to designate at least one recipient to receive the message with the attachment, to enable means for the sender to designate at least one recipient to

receive the message without the attachment, to enable means for a recipient to create and edit a reception profile, and to enable means to transmit the electronic mail message over the network from the sender to the recipients. The reception profile includes the recipient's preferences with regard to receipt of prospective attachments. The message is transmitted from the sender without the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies not to receive an attachment, regardless of whether the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with or without the attachment. If the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with the attachment, the message is transmitted from the sender with the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies to receive an attachment.

Dependent claims 44-47 recite features regarding the reception profile.

For a discussion of an example of the apparatus, applicant refers to the explanations above in connection with claim 6.

The means for a sender to append an attachment to an electronic mail message, the means for the sender to designate at least one recipient to receive the message with the attachment, the means for the sender to designate at least one recipient to receive the message without the attachment, and the means for a recipient to create and edit a reception profile can include the e-mail program with the interface, which runs, for example, on the sender computer 201 or any of the recipient computers. (*See, e.g.*, Specification, at page 20, ll. 18-30.) The means to transmit the electronic mail message over the network can include the e-mail program with the interface, the LANs 200 and 204, and/or the Internet 202. (*See Id.*, *e.g.*, at page 11, l. 23 – page 13, l. 29.)

Independent claim 23 with dependent claims 48-51

Claim 23 recites a method for transmitting electronic mail from a sender to recipients. The method comprises inputting a message, appending an attachment to the message, designating at least one recipient to receive the message and the attachment, designating at least one recipient to receive the message without the attachment, enabling a recipient to create and edit a reception profile, and transmitting the message over a network from the sender to the recipients. The profile includes the recipient's preferences with regard to receipt of prospective attachments. The message is transmitted from the sender without the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies not to receive an attachment, regardless of whether the sender

designated the recipient to receive the message with or without the attachment. If the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with the attachment, the message is transmitted from the sender with the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies to receive an attachment.

Dependent claims 48-51 recite features regarding the reception profile.

For a discussion of an example of the method, applicant refers to the explanations above in connection with claim 6.

Independent claim 29

Claim 29 recites a program-controlled apparatus operable to communicate via e-mail with one or more recipient computers. The apparatus is configured to allow a user of the apparatus to perform the following operations: input a message, append an attachment to the message, designate at least one recipient of the plurality of recipients to receive the message and the attachment, designate at least one recipient to receive the message without the attachment, enable a recipient to create and edit a reception profile, and transmit the message over a network from the sender to the recipients. The profile includes the recipient's preferences with regard to prospective receipt of attachments. The message is transmitted from the sender without the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies not to receive an attachment, regardless of whether the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with or without the attachment. If the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with the attachment, the message is transmitted from the sender with the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies to receive an attachment.

For a discussion of an example of the program-controlled apparatus, applicant refers to the explanations above in connection with claim 6.

Independent claims 52, 57, 62 and 67 with dependent claims 53-56, 58-61, 63-66 and 68-71, respectively

Independent claims 52, 57, 62 and 67 are similar to independent claims 6, 17, 23 and 29, respectively, except that claims 52, 57, 62 and 67 recite "that the message is transmitted from the sender without the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies not to receive an

attachment, even though the sender designated that recipient to receive the message with the attachment." Thus, claims 52, 57, 62 and 67 recite "even though" whereas claims 6, 17, 23 and 29 recite "regardless of whether."

Dependent claims 53-56, 58-61, 63-66 and 68-71 recite features regarding the reception profile.

The means recited in claim 57-61 include the corresponding features as explained in connection with claims 17 and 44-47.

(6) Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

1. Whether claims 6, 17, 23, 29, 40-42, 44-46, 48-50, 52-55, 57-60, 62-65 and 67-70 were properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,311,210 to Foladare et al. (hereinafter Foladare) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,256,672 B1 to Redpath (hereinafter Redpath), and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,903,723 to Beck et al. (hereinafter Beck).

2. Whether claims 43, 47, 51, 56, 61, 66 and 71 were properly rejected as unpatentable over Foladare, Redpath, and Beck and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,052,735 to Ulrich et al. (hereinafter Ulrich).

(7) Argument

1. Claims 6, 17, 23, 29, 40-42, 44-46, 48-50, 52-55, 57-60, 62-65 and 67-70 are patentable over the combination of Foladare, Redpath, and Beck.

The following arguments are presented in connection with independent claim 6. However, they are equally valid for independent claims 17, 23, 52, 57, 62 and 67.

The invention is based in part on the recognition that e-mail transmission can benefit when the sender-side is controllable from the recipient-side. Benefits can include reducing the load of a network environment and avoiding unnecessary use of network capacity, when, for example, attachments are transmitted to a recipient only when specified so by a recipient's reception profile.

The cited references do not disclose or suggest any control mechanism that provides for the recipient-side to affect processes at the sender-side, such as whether an e-mail should be loaded onto a network at the sender-side with, or without, an attachment. The cited references disclose attachment-related processes that take place exclusively on the recipient-side (Foladare) or exclusively on the sender-side (Redpath and Beck). That is, Foladare allows only for the recipient-side to control the recipient-side decisions, and Redpath and Beck allow only for the sender-side to control the sender-side decisions.

However, according to claims 6, 17, 23, 29, 52, 57, 62 and 67, the reception profile, which is created and edited by a recipient on the recipient-side, impacts on or controls the transmission process at the sender-side. Thus, the claimed subject matter is significantly different from the cited references. Moreover, there would have been no reason to modify the one-sided features of the cited references into features that control the transmission process at the sender-side from the recipient-side.

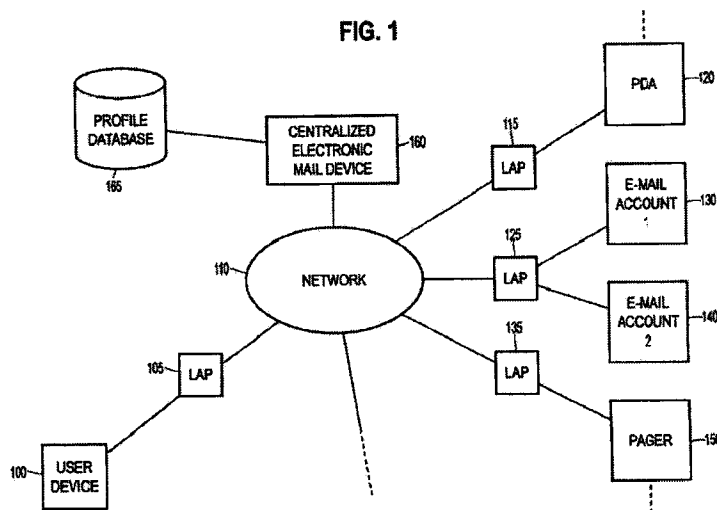
Foladare provides an e-mail distribution system that allows a user having incoming e-mail distributed to multiple receiving devices such as personal computers, personal digital assistants, or alpha pagers. When the incoming e-mail was sent from a sender to the user with attachments, the e-mail distribution system distributes the e-mail without, with some, or with all attachments to the receiving devices depending on, for example, the type of receiving device.

In particular, Foladare discloses a centralized electronic mail device 160 that after having received an electronic mail message (e-mail) from a user device 100 distributes that e-mail to a variety of electronic mail receiving devices 120-150 according to a profile database 165. For example, the distribution of the received e-mail is performed such that only those portions of the e-mail, "which the receiving party deems the most important by identifying them in the profile

database 165, are sent to the electronic mail receiving device 120-150." (See Foladare, FIG. 1 reproduced below and col. 1, ll. 36-55 and col. 6, ll. 11-15.)

In Foladare, the function of the centralized electronic mail device 160 is described by the verb *send*, e.g., "portions being sent" to the receiving devices. Applicant notes that the verb *send* as used in Foladare in connection with the centralized electronic mail device 160 refers to the distribution of a received e-mail, i.e., the centralized electronic mail device 160 acts after the e-mail was previously sent by the user device 100, i.e., transmitted from the user device 100 to the centralized electronic mail device 160.

Thus, when considering Foladare in its entirety, the user device 100 is part of the sender-side and it is distinct from the centralized electronic mail device 160 which receives the e-mail along with any attachments as an "input." Accordingly, the centralized electronic mail device 160 and the electronic mail receiving devices 120-150 are part of the recipient-side.



Foladare states at col. 6, ll. 11-15:

Using the above centralized electronic mail device 160, a receiving party may receive portions of an electronic mail message even when the electronic mail receiving device has a limited storage or limited display size. In this way, only those portions of the electronic mail message, which the receiving party deems the most important by identifying them in the profile database 165, are sent to the electronic mail receiving device 120-150. Thus, other information in the electronic mail message that the receiving party does not wish to see is not displayed.

The Final Action (at page 3) seems to indicate that the information in the profile database 165 corresponds to the claimed "reception profile." However, the profile database 165 only operates together with Foladare's centralized mail device 160. Therefore, the profile database 165 merely affects the distribution of an electronic mail message that already has been transmitted from the sender. Foladare is not interested in sender-side control, and the profile database 165 does not affect the transmission process at the sender-side as will be further explained below.

The Office action also alleges that col. 3, ll. 5-14 and col. 6, ll. 21-40 of Foladare disclose "transmit[ing] the message over a network from the sender to the plurality of recipients, wherein the message is transmitted without the attachment to any recipient, whose reception profile specifies not to receive an attachment, regardless of whether the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with or without the attachment."

Claim 6 recites transmitting the electronic mail message over the network from the sender to the plurality of recipients, wherein the message is "transmitted from the sender without the attachment to any recipient, whose reception profile specifies not to receive an attachment, regardless of whether the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with or without the attachment"

Although Foladare discloses that the centralized electronic mail device 160 determines "which device are to receive any attachments" (col. 6, ll. 21-23), Foladare does not disclose that the message is sent from the sender without attachments as recited in claim 6. Instead, all messages are sent from the sender to the centralized electronic mail device 160 with attachments so that it can distribute the message and its attachments according to the entries in the profile database 165.

Foladare's centralized electronic mail device 160 is part of the recipient-side because it receives messages that were transmitted from the user device 100 through the network 110, i.e., it receives e-mails previously sent from a sending party. The decision to send the e-mail message with or without an attachment and, in particular, to load an e-mail onto the network with

or without attachment, is made at the sender-side (user device 100) and is unaffected by the recipient-side including the centralized electronic mail device. (*See Foladare*, col. 1, ll. 36-53.)

Thus, the centralized electronic mail device processes e-mails that previously were sent (with or without an attachment), but does not impact how e-mail messages are transmitted from the sender. Specifically, the centralized electronic mail device does not impact whether the e-mail message is sent from the sender with or without the attachment.

Essentially, Foladare's centralized electronic mail device 160 decides how to handle a message and any attachment that already have been received and whether or not to distribute that previously transmitted e-mail to various receiving devices and, further, whether the previously transmitted e-mail should be distributed to a particular receiving device with or without an attachment depending on whether the particular receiving device is suited to receive the attachment. (*See Id.*, col. 3, ll. 36-54; col. 6, ll. 18-40). For example, a previously transmitted e-mail may be distributed to a person's alpha pager without the attachment, while the e-mail with the attachment may be distributed to the person's personal computer. Foladare's centralized electronic mail device does not, and cannot, impact whether or not the e-mail is transmitted from the sender-side with or without an attachment. Moreover, Foladare does not even recognize the possibility of controlling sender-side decisions from the recipient-side.

In the Response to Argument at page 10 of the Final Action, the Examiner attempts to clarify a previous rejection by quoting specific language from Foladare (col. 3, ll. 5-13, 50-54, col. 6, ll. 21-23, 36-38). Contrary to the Examiner's allegation, the quoted language does not show that "the message is transmitted from the sender without the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies not to receive an attachment, regardless of whether the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with or without the attachment."

Applicant emphasizes that Foladare does not address modifying the transmission process of an e-mail at the sender-side because the centralized electronic mail device 160 only distributes previously sent e-mails that have been received by the centralized electronic mail device.

In contrast to claim 6, Foladare does not disclose that if the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with an attachment, "the message is transmitted from the sender

without the attachment" if the recipient's "reception profile specifies not to receive an attachment."

Redpath discloses an email notification process with a new addressee line identifier that allows an e-mail sender to notify additional addressees of what has been sent to the primary addressee without slowing down transmission time or wasting storage space by including unneeded and possibly large attachment files. (See Redpath, abstract.)

On the sender-side, Redpath's new addressee line identifier allows an e-mail sender to send an icon to indicate an attachment has been sent to another user. However, the sender alone—and not the addressee—controls which addressee line identifier is used. Thus, the transmission process is controlled entirely at the sender-side and thus, whether or not a recipient receives an attachment is controlled by the sender.

The Final Action relies on Redpath for its disclosure of a "sender designating a recipient to receive the message without the attachment." The Office action further alleges that a person of ordinary skill in the art would have modified Foladare in view of Redpath in order to enable the sender to designate a recipient not to receive an attachment. However, even if a combined system would allow the sender to send emails without attachments, the combined system would not result in the claimed subject matter. Instead, in a combined Foladare-Redpath system, the decision to transmit an e-mail message from the sender with or without an attachment would still be controlled entirely at the sender-side (as taught by Redpath). There is nothing in either Redpath or Foladare that suggests any action at the recipient-side impacts whether the message is transmitted from the sender with or without an attachment.

Beck discloses a method for transmitting e-mail attachments by replacing the attachment at the sender-side with an attachment reference. Thus, instead of transmitting the attachment, a reference is transmitted and the attachment is stored locally. At the recipient-side, a user can later access the attachment via the attachment reference. (See Beck, col. 5, ll. 3-5, col. 5, ll. 39-53.)

At page 4 of the Final Action, the Office action relies on Beck for its disclosure that "the message is transmitted from the sender without the attachment."

As relevant here, Beck is similar to Redpath. Whereas Redpath discloses sending an attachment icon, Beck discloses sending an attachment reference.

In Redpath and Beck, replacement of the attachment (with an icon or an attachment reference) is based solely on a decision at the sender-side. Whether or not the attachment to the email is sent is not based on a reception profile created by a recipient. Thus, Beck, like Redpath, does not disclose that transmission of an attachment from the sender to a recipient is impacted by a "reception profile" created by a recipient.

Even if there were some reason to combine Foladare, Redpath and Beck, the combined system would, at most, replace an attachment either with the "attachment icon" (Redpath) or with the "attachment reference" (Beck). The replacement of any attachment would be based solely on the sender-side and would still be independent of information from the recipient-side. The replacement of any attachment also would be independent of Foladare's profile data base.

The centralized electronic mail device 160 of Foladare receives email with and without attachments and distributes attachments only to those receiving devices suited to receive attachments. Thus, there would have been no reason for a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the centralized electronic mail device to impact what information is transmitted by the sender-side.

Indeed, using Foladare's centralized electronic mail device 160 to control the transmission process would be contrary to the intended function of Foladare's electronic mail device. For example, if in Foladare's profile database an entry for an alpha pager receiving device would state not to receive attachments and if that alpha pager entry would be used to control the transmission process at the sender-side, attachments would not be attached to any e-mail to the electronic mail device which is used by a recipient for the alpha pager. Then, Foladare's electronic mail device would never receive any attachments and, therefore, could not provide attachments to those receiving devices suited to receive attachments. In other words, the electronic mail device requires receiving attachments and, therefore, does not disclose a reception profile that impacts on the transmission process at the sender-side.

In summary, the combined disclosures of Foladare, Redpath and Beck do not disclose or render obvious all features of claim 6.

For the reasons discussed above, the rejections of claim 6, 17, 23, 29, 52, 57, 62 and 67 based on the combination of Foladare, Redpath and Beck should be reversed.¹

Claims 40-42, 44-46, 48-50, 53-55, 58-60, 63-65 and 68-70 depend from independent claims 6, 17, 23, 52, 57, 62 and 67, respectively. Therefore, those claims are patentable at least for the same reasons.

Accordingly, the rejections of claims 40-42, 44-46, 48-50, 53-55, 58-60, 63-65 and 68-70 should be reversed as well.

2. Claims 43, 47, 51, 56, 61, 66 and 71 are patentable over the combination of Foladare, Redpath, Beck and Ulrich.

Claims 43, 47, 51, 56, 61, 66 and 71 are patentable at least for the same reasons discussed above with regard to claims 6, 17, 23, 52, 57, 62 and 67 because claims 43, 47, 51, 56, 61, 66 and 71 depend indirectly from claims 6, 17, 23, 52, 57, 62 and 67, respectively, and Ulrich does not disclose any teaching or reason that would have led a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the teachings of Foladare, Redpath and Beck such that a transmission process at the sender-side is impacted by a reception profile created by a recipient.

Ulrich discloses email synchronization between a desktop computer and a mobile device. A user of a mobile device may wish "to receive only certain attachments to electronic mail messages, chosen by the user dynamically on an ad hoc basis, or chosen according to preselectable filtering criteria." (*See, e.g.*, col. 3, ll. 15-21.)

Ulrich discloses further that the user can decide to download an attachment during synchronization. Synchronization is a specific process of coupling the mobile device and the desktop device such that the two devices contain the same updated information. (*See* Ulrich, col. 1, l. 64 - col. 2, l. 2 and col. 13, ll. 31-43.)

¹ As mentioned above, the forgoing remarks are equally applicable to independent claims 17, 23, 27, 52, 57, 62 and 67.

The desktop computer and the mobile device interact at the recipient-side and thus the transmission process at the sender-side is not influenced.

With respect to claim 43, the Office action acknowledges that "the combination of Foladare, Redpath and Beck does not explicitly teach a profile that specifies that a recipient is not to receive attachments during a particular time." (*See* Final Action, at page 9.) The Office action relies on Ulrich (col. 13, ll. 12-16), which states:

Attachment indicator field 136 indicates the presence of an attachment to any electronic mail message displayed under file name field 138. Preferably, items displayed in attachment field 136 indicate whether the attachment is scheduled to be downloaded at the next synchronization.

The above citation merely states that an indicator field on Ulrich's mobile device can indicate whether an email includes an attachment and whether that attachment is scheduled to be downloaded. There is no connection between a scheduled synchronization (between desktop computer and mobile device) and a profile "that specifies the recipient is not to receive attachments during a particular time frame" as recited in claim 43.

Thus, even though Ulrich discloses that the mobile device may not receive attachments, Ulrich does not disclose assigning specific time frames to this restriction.

Claim 43 and claims 47, 51, 56, 61, 66 and 71 recite substantially the same feature. Therefore, the forgoing general remarks regarding claim 43 are equally valid for claims 47, 51, 56, 61, 66 and 71.

Accordingly, the rejections of claims 43, 47, 51, 56, 61, 66 and 71 should be reversed.

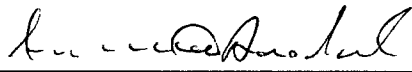
Conclusion

In view of the forgoing remarks, applicant respectfully requests reversal of all claim rejections.

The brief fee of \$540 is being paid concurrently with the Electronic Filing System (EFS). Please apply any other charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 11/10/08



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Appendix of Claims on Appeal

6. An article comprising a machine-readable medium storing machine-readable instructions that, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to perform the following operations:

enable a sender to input a message;

enable the sender to append an attachment to the message;

enable the sender to designate at least one recipient of a plurality of recipients to receive the message and the attachment;

enable the sender to designate at least one recipient of the plurality of recipients to receive the message without the attachment;

enable a recipient to create and edit a reception profile, the profile including the recipient's preferences with regard to receipt of prospective attachments; and

transmit the message over a network from the sender to the plurality of recipients, wherein the message is transmitted from the sender without the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies not to receive an attachment, regardless of whether the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with or without the attachment, and

wherein if the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with the attachment, the message is transmitted from the sender with the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies to receive an attachment.

17. An apparatus to transmit electronic mail from a sender to a plurality of recipients comprising:

a port for coupling the apparatus to a network; and

a processor;

wherein the processor is configured to:

enable means for a sender to append an attachment to an electronic mail message;

enable means for the sender to designate at least one recipient to receive the message with the attachment;

enable means for the sender to designate at least one recipient to receive the message without the attachment;

enable means for a recipient to create and edit a reception profile, the profile including the recipient's preferences with regard to receipt of prospective attachments; and

enable means to transmit the electronic mail message over the network from the sender to the plurality of recipients, wherein the message is transmitted from the sender without the attachment to any recipient, whose reception profile specifies not to receive an attachment, regardless of whether the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with or without the attachment, and

wherein if the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with the attachment, the message is transmitted from the sender with the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies to receive an attachment.

23. A method for transmitting electronic mail from a sender to a plurality of recipients, comprising:

inputting a message;

appending an attachment to the message;

designating at least one recipient of the plurality of recipients to receive the message and the attachment;

designating at least one recipient of the plurality of recipients to receive the message without the attachment;

enabling a recipient to create and edit a reception profile, the profile including the recipient's preferences with regard to receipt of prospective attachments; and

transmitting the message over a network from the sender to the plurality of recipients, wherein the message is transmitted from the sender without the attachment to any recipient, whose reception profile specifies not to receive an attachment, regardless of whether the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with or without the attachment, and

wherein if the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with the attachment, the message is transmitted from the sender with the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies to receive an attachment.

29. A program-controlled apparatus operable to communicate via e-mail with one or more recipient computers, the apparatus configured to allow a user of the apparatus to perform the following operations:

input a message;

append an attachment to the message;

designate at least one recipient of the plurality of recipients to receive the message and the attachment;

designate at least one recipient of the plurality of recipients to receive the message without the attachment;

enable a recipient to create and edit a reception profile, the profile including the recipient's preferences with regard to prospective receipt of attachments; and

transmit the message over a network from the sender to the plurality of recipients, wherein the message is transmitted from the sender without the attachment to any recipient, whose reception profile specifies not to receive an attachment, regardless of whether the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with or without the attachment, and

wherein if the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with the attachment, the message is transmitted from the sender with the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies to receive an attachment.

40. The article of claim 6 including instructions that, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to enable the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies information about prospective attachments that the recipient is unable, or does not wish, to receive.

41. The article of claim 40 including instructions that, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to prevent receipt by the recipient of prospective attachments that the recipient's profile indicates the recipient is unable, or does not wish, to receive.

42. The article of claim 41 including instructions that, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to enable the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies the recipient is not to receive attachments larger than a specified size.

43. The article of claim 41 including instructions that, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to enable the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies the recipient is not to receive attachments during a particular time frame.

44. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein the processor is configured to enable means for the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies information about prospective attachments that the recipient is unable, or does not wish, to receive.

45. The apparatus of claim 44 wherein the processor is configured to prevent receipt by the recipient of prospective attachments that the recipient's profile indicates the recipient is unable, or does not wish, to receive.

46. The apparatus of claim 45 wherein the processor is configured to enable means for the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies the recipient is not to receive attachments larger than a specified size.

47. The apparatus of claim 45 wherein the processor is configured to enable means for the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies the recipient is not to receive attachments during a particular time frame.

48. The method of claim 23 including enabling the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies information about prospective attachments that the recipient is unable, or does not wish, to receive.

49. The method of claim 48 including preventing receipt by the recipient of prospective attachments that the recipient's profile indicates the recipient is unable, or does not wish, to receive.

50. The method of claim 49 including enabling the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies the recipient is not to receive attachments larger than a specified size.

51. The method of claim 49 including enabling the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies the recipient is not to receive attachments during a particular time frame.

52. An article comprising a machine-readable medium storing machine-readable instructions that, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to perform the following operations:

enable a sender to input a message;

enable the sender to append an attachment to the message;

enable the sender to designate at least one recipient of a plurality of recipients to receive the message and the attachment;

enable the sender to designate at least one recipient of the plurality of recipients to receive the message without the attachment;

enable a recipient to create and edit a reception profile, the profile including the recipient's preferences with regard to receipt of prospective attachments; and

transmit the message over a network from the sender to the plurality of recipients, wherein the message is transmitted from the sender without the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies not to receive an attachment, even though the sender designated that recipient to receive the message with the attachment, and

wherein if the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with the attachment, the message is transmitted from the sender with the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies to receive an attachment.

53. The article of claim 52 including instructions that, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to enable the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies information about prospective attachments that the recipient is unable, or does not wish, to receive.

54. The article of claim 53 including instructions that, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to prevent receipt by the recipient of prospective attachments that the recipient's profile indicates the recipient is unable, or does not wish, to receive.

55. The article of claim 54 including instructions that, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to enable the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies the recipient is not to receive attachments larger than a specified size.

56. The article of claim 54 including instructions that, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to enable the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies the recipient is not to receive attachments during a particular time frame.

57. An apparatus to transmit electronic mail from a sender to a plurality of recipients comprising:

a port for coupling the apparatus to a network; and

a processor;

wherein the processor is configured to:

enable means for a sender to append an attachment to an electronic mail message;

enable means for the sender to designate at least one recipient to receive the message with the attachment;

enable means for the sender to designate at least one recipient to receive the message without the attachment;

enable means for a recipient to create and edit a reception profile, the profile including the recipient's preferences with regard to receipt of prospective attachments; and

enable means to transmit the electronic mail message over the network from the sender to the plurality of recipients, wherein the message is transmitted from the sender without the attachment to any recipient, whose reception profile specifies not to receive an attachment, even though the sender designated that recipient to receive the message with the attachment, and wherein if the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with the attachment, the message is transmitted from the sender with the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies to receive an attachment.

58. The apparatus of claim 57 wherein the processor is configured to enable means for the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies information about prospective attachments that the recipient is unable, or does not wish, to receive.

59. The apparatus of claim 58 wherein the processor is configured to prevent receipt by the recipient of prospective attachments that the recipient's profile indicates the recipient is unable, or does not wish, to receive.

60. The apparatus of claim 59 wherein the processor is configured to enable means for the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies the recipient is not to receive attachments larger than a specified size.

61. The apparatus of claim 59 wherein the processor is configured to enable means for the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies the recipient is not to receive attachments during a particular time frame.

62. A method for transmitting electronic mail from a sender to a plurality of recipients, comprising:

inputting a message;

appending an attachment to the message;

designating at least one recipient of the plurality of recipients to receive the message and the attachment;

designating at least one recipient of the plurality of recipients to receive the message without the attachment;

enabling a recipient to create and edit a reception profile, the profile including the recipient's preferences with regard to receipt of prospective attachments; and

transmitting the message over a network from the sender to the plurality of recipients, wherein the message is transmitted from the sender without the attachment to any recipient, whose reception profile specifies not to receive an attachment, even though the sender designated that recipient to receive the message with the attachment, and

wherein if the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with the attachment, the message is transmitted from the sender with the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies to receive an attachment.

63. The method of claim 62 including enabling the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies information about prospective attachments that the recipient is unable, or does not wish, to receive.

64. The method of claim 63 including preventing receipt by the recipient of prospective attachments that the recipient's profile indicates the recipient is unable, or does not wish, to receive.

65. The method of claim 64 including enabling the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies the recipient is not to receive attachments larger than a specified size.

66. The method of claim 64 including enabling the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies the recipient is not to receive attachments during a particular time frame.

67. A program-controlled apparatus operable to communicate via e-mail with one or more recipient computers, the apparatus configured to allow a user of the apparatus to perform the following operations:

input a message;

append an attachment to the message;

designate at least one recipient of the plurality of recipients to receive the message and the attachment;

designate at least one recipient of the plurality of recipients to receive the message without the attachment;

enable a recipient to create and edit a reception profile, the profile including the recipient's preferences with regard to prospective receipt of attachments; and

transmit the message over a network from the sender to the plurality of recipients, wherein the message is transmitted from the sender without the attachment to any recipient, whose reception profile specifies not to receive an attachment, even though the sender designated that recipient to receive the message with the attachment, and

wherein if the sender designated the recipient to receive the message with the attachment, the message is transmitted from the sender with the attachment to any recipient whose reception profile specifies to receive an attachment.

68. The apparatus of claim 67, wherein the apparatus is configured to allow a user of the apparatus to enable the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies information about prospective attachments that the recipient is unable, or does not wish, to receive.

69. The apparatus of claim 68, wherein the apparatus is configured to prevent receipt by the recipient of prospective attachments that the recipient's profile indicates the recipient is unable, or does not wish, to receive.

70. The apparatus of claim 69, wherein the apparatus is configured to enable the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies the recipient is not to receive attachments larger than a specified size.

71. The apparatus of claim 69, wherein the apparatus is configured to enable the recipient to create and edit a profile that specifies the recipient is not to receive attachments during a particular time frame.

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Evidence Appendix

None.

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Related Proceedings Appendix

None.